INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD

INDUSTRIAL WORKER

★ EDUCATION ★ ORGANIZATION ★ EMANCIPATION

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Unions Walk Out At Continental Air

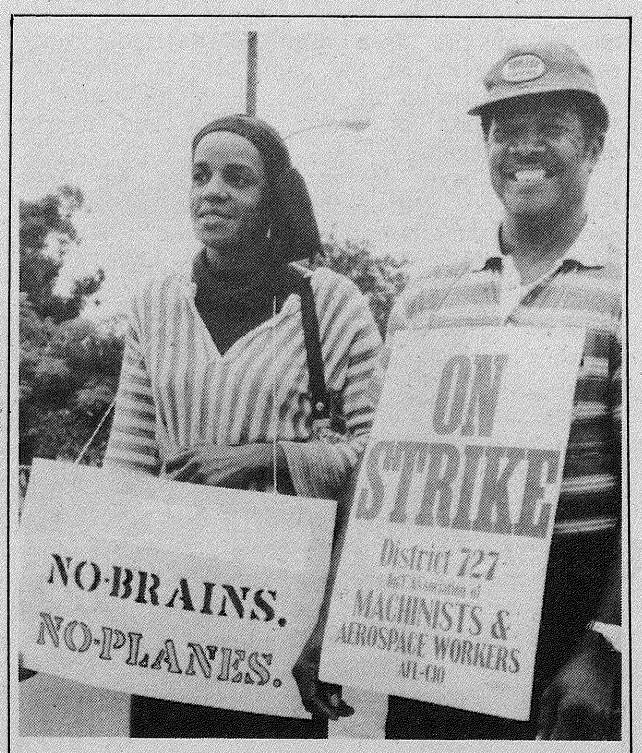
Although chiefly billed in the mainstream media as a pilots' strike, the action at Continental Airlines goes further than that. Some 2,000 members of the International Association of Machinists, who represent the ground mechanics, kitchen crews, janitorial staff and others have been out on the picket line since August 13. And when the pilots went out on strike on October 2, they were joined by the less prestigious and hence less visible Union of Flight Attendants.

Both the pilots and the flight attendants have been crossing the Machinists' picket lines since August. Naturally, this has caused some bitterness on the Machinists' part.

The Machinists had been negotiating a new contract with the airline for several months prior to going out on the line. Since they are not certified by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) as the sole bargaining unit for the people they represent, and since their contract expired, the airline has been able to operate since August by using scabs, many of them already being trained before the Machinists walked out.

Most of the 1800 workers the Machinists represent are unlikely to be rehired unless

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Two members of the Machinists Union on the picket line.

Companies Abuse Bankruptcy Laws

On September 24, Continental Airlines filed for bankruptcy. On that same day, it reduced its employee total from 12,000 to about 4,500 and cut some of their salaries as much as 50 percent.

Three days later, Eastern Airlines presented an ultimatum to its employees: unless they accept a 15 percent pay cut by November 1, Eastern would also file for bankruptcy.

What the use of bankruptcy laws adds up to in this latest round of airline-labor disputes is the ability of companies to take the teeth out of collective bargaining by rewriting contracts, or the break-up of the unions altogether.

Although Continental and Eastern officials insist that the purpose of the suit is not to bust unions, the winning of their cases would do just that. Chapter 11 of the Federal Bankruptcy Act was intended to give insolvent companies a hope of survival by permitting them to stretch out or reduce debt payments and rearrange their business under court supervision. One action which is permissible under reorganization is the cancellation of contracts.

The practice of using these laws to escape company liabilities is a relatively new

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The Myth of Foreign Industrial Competition

by Sam Dolgoff

What is fast becoming the greatest economic catastrophe of modern times--the decline of American industry--is commonly ascribed to the inability of American capitalism to meet foreign competition. But the impact of foreign competition on industry has been deliberately and grossly exaggerated by the vested interests. "Foreign competition" actually camouflages a brazen, insidious attack on the living standards of American workers and their families. Workers are being blackmailed to surrender hard-won gains by their employers' threats of abandoning plants.

The pretext that deindustrialization is necessary because enterprises are no longer profitable, is not in the least substantiated by the facts. Between 1945 and 1971 profits ranged from 15.5 percent to 10 percent minimum. On the contrary, entire industries have been systematically dismantled in recent years because conglomerates have been demanding an arbitrarily high fixed rate of profit.

Viable businesses have been closed down, even though they were making a profit, because the profit was not enough to satisfy company policy. For example, the Herkimer library furniture plant had been consistently profitable for over twenty years; it was closed down because it did not meet the 25 percent fixed rate of profit set by the conglomerate.

While 38 million jobs were lost in the 1970s as a direct result of disinvestment in American enterprises, corporations have plenty of money to invest when the profits are greater elsewhere. General Electric, for example, expanded its world-wide payroll to 30,000 foreign jobs and reduced U.S. employment by 25,000, while R.C.A. cut employment in the U.S. by 14,000 and increased its foreign workforce by 19,000.

On top of this investment shifting, companies expect domestic labor to make further sacrifices on the threat of shutting down plants. Ford Motor Company announced that 40 percent of its capital budget will be spent outside the United States. while General Motors gave up its promise to build a multi-billion dollar plant in Kansas City, Missouri and shifted its spending to Spain.

Goodyear, Uniroyal and other rubber companies shut down their older plants, while expanding overseas. Uniroyal now produces tires in Brazil, Turkey, Spain and Australia. Chase Manhattan Bank's investment in Japanese steel rose from $59 million to over $204 million, and Citibank's loans to Japanese enterprises rose from $59 million to over $230

continued on page 4

San Diego Butchers Strike

San Diego area slaughterhouse workers remain on strike at three meat packing companies in a dispute over proposed pay cuts and contract language. At the county's only other slaughterhouse, the United Food and Commercial Workers Local 229--which represents workers at all San Diego County meat packers--signed a one-year contract including "small" pay cuts for workers there.

On strike since June 8, butchers were ordered to clear out their lockers August 1, following an unproductive bargaining session. Management is currently insisting on pay cuts totalling $3.50 an hour, and has begun harassing pickets.

Last July, C&M Meat Packing Corp., largest of the struck firms, demanded that a portable toilet, currently situated for use by pickets on a railroad right-of-way outside the C&M gates, be removed. When the union objected, management backed off, with C&M lawyer Harry Stang (who earlier stated that management was "unhappy" about asking for pay cuts) assuring reporters that "I don't consider this one of the critical issues in the strike."

Union officials told the Industrial Worker that they were currently considering action to interrupt the struck companies' distribution of scab meat, which is brought in from outside the county, but were unwilling to discuss details.

I.W. Date Changes

If you have looked closely at the masthead of this month's **Industrial Worker**, you noticed that it reads "December, 1983" instead of November. This was done to put the date in accord with our actual publishing schedule. No issue has been skipped, and subscribers will receive their full number of copies. For further explanation, see the letter from FW Bruce Kayton on page 6.

Minutes Now Available from HQ

Minutes of the 41st Convention of the Industrial Workers of the World are now available from the Chicago headquarters. Please include $1.50 to cover costs.

Correspondence and Papers Requested

The Emma Goldman Papers Project seeks letters, articles and speeches by or about Emma Goldman (1869-1940), prominent anarchist and feminist in the United States from 1890-1919. Contact: EGPP, U.C. Berkeley, Institute for the Study of Social Change, 2420 Bowditch, Berkeley, CA 94720.



Face it, fellow workers, we live in a society that is full of ethnic and racist stereotypes. I remember some fellow workers saying they are being stereotyped every time they are referred to as "Anglo." I have been called Anglo, gringo or gava, because not only was my mother white, I am also married to a white woman. When I am overseas I am called "Yank" even though I have no English ancestry. (Yanghi was the Passamaquoddy word for Englishman.)

Take the people residing in this great society whose ancestors were conquered by imperialists from the Iberian peninsula. Add in those whose forebears were kidnapped from Africa by those imperialists, and those whose antecedents migrated from that same peninsula. Despite the rich cultural variety that can be found among all those who possess Spanish surnames, all are lumped together under the generic term of "Hispanic."

It can be understood that people who are unfamiliar with the Spanish language would have difficulty in distinguishing people they only encounter on a casual basis. When government and social agencies persist in such generalizations, it shows a callous and contemptuous disregard for the cultural integrity of millions of people who are the closest neighbors of those who refer to themselves as the dominant culture.

Only a few generations ago, most humans lived and died within a few kilometers of where they were born, including those here in Freedomland. It was quite simple for the employers to keep the producing class apart, not only because most people lived in isolated small communities, but they also had the opportunity of playing upon various regional fears and suspicions.

Since then the nature of the Capitalist System has done away with the customary sedentary life that most people were living. When a worker has to live where the jobs are, the ever-pervasive necessity of staying alive takes precedence over any love of birthplace with the result that today most workers are living far away from where they were born and in all probability will be dying at again a different location.

Those who control our lives can no longer rely upon our suspicion of faraway places, since changing economic conditions have made us far more geographically sophisticated than our ancestors were. What to our grandparents were far-off exotic places are now next Summer's vacation spots.

However, Bosso can still play upon our fears of the unknown by creating distrust of other workers who have a different skin-coloring and communicate in a different language.

Some would suggest that a remedy for this problem would be for all people to have one language and one culture. Interestingly enough, the one language and culture recommended always happen to be that of the recommenders, which smacks suspiciously of just another form of imperialism.

This Earth was populated in all corners by migrating peoples long before the dawn of recorded history, resulting in the variety of physical and cultural types as well as the rich trove of languages that have come down to us over the ages. We should realise that a World where every city would be Paris and every countryside the Grand Canyon would be no less drab and uninteresting than a World where everybody spoke the same language and ate the same food. How many times can you read **War and Peace**, no matter how great a work it is?

We do not need an invasion from outer space to unify our diversified humanity. We can quite comfortably live with each other and all our languages, cuisines and skin colors if we could build ourselves one big union. After all, our administrators seem to have their own one big union. It matters not if their slaves are on the battlefield shooting each other's guts out, the biggies always manage to have champagne together.

C.C. Redcloud

Love Canal Mess Lingers

It has been three years since President Carter declared a federal emergency in the Love Canal area of New York, clearing the way for hundreds of families to sell their homes to the government and flee the chemically contaminated area. Earlier, houses nearest Love Canal itself, a former waste dump for Hooker Chemicals and Plastics Corp., were evacuated and demolished. Since then, more than $50 million has been spent both to clean up dioxin and other toxic chemicals that have escaped from the site and to prevent further leakage of the tons of chemicals buried here.

Last year, an $8 million Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) study concluded that the extent of the chemical contamination outside the immediate dump site was less than was feared. The study suggested that many houses in the area may be habitable once remedial action at the dump site is completed and the clean-up of toxic chemicals found in the sediments of storm sewers and nearby creeks is begun.

"We have demonstrated that we have the science and technological know-how to contain contamination," claimed Richard Morris, executive director of the Love Canal Area Revitalization Agency.

But the U.S. Office of Technology Assessment, an arm of Congress, reviewed the EPA report earlier this summer and said it contained "critical flaws" and was "inadequate."

In August, New York's Department of Environmental Conservation disclosed that new soil tests found toxic chemicals have seeped from the dump site to the location of a planned underground containment wall, which officials had thought was beyond the area of chemical contamination. Early in September, investigators from the State University of New York at Binghamton, who spent four years studying field mice living near the dump site, reported that the mice had half the life expectancy of those living a mile away, and their livers showed accumulations of lindane, a pesticide, and other toxins that had been dumped into the site.

Disappointed officials have had to postpone plans to begin moving people back into the vacant houses. With thousands of dumps for toxic waste chemicals like Love Canal scattered around the United States, there is strong public pressure to find a solution to the toxic waste mess. In many areas the clean-up is just beginning, and public officials eager for a quick fix may be promising more than they can deliver.



Positions Open

Interested parties may apply for the following positions on the Industrial Worker's editorial staff:

Correspondent: Correspondents will regularly submit news articles. In general, these will be about events in their own geographical region, but they may deal with more far-ranging topics as well.

Contributing Editor: Contributing editors will regularly submit feature articles, guest columns, news analyses or other major pieces.

Contributing Artist: Contributing artists will submit cartoons, sketches, photographs or graphic designs.

Department Editor: Department editors will take responsibility for soliciting and/or writing articles within a given area of interest, such as co-ops and collectives, economics, labor history or labor law.

Reviewers: Will review books, movies, television programs or works of art.

This is not to imply that anyone is not welcome to submit an article in any of these areas, but holders of these positions will be listed in the staff box and relied upon to contribute regularly.

Those interested should be aware that we do not require a high level of literary ability, just the capacity to write clearly and informatively. We will help polish articles into final form as need be.

For further information, write the IW Collective.



★EDUCATION ★ORGANIZATION ★EMANCIPATION

AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL

ONE UNION ONE LABEL ONE ENEMY

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GENERAL SECRETARY-TREASURER
David Tucker

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agent orange

Civilians also Exposed

Between 1965 and 1971, the U.S. government sprayed nearly 11 million gallons of herbicides, including Agent Orange which contains dioxin, on Vietnam in an effort to destroy crops and to deny the Viet Cong the protective cover of the jungle. Spraying was halted after reports that women in the sprayed areas had given birth to deformed children.

Years later, ailing veterans (mostly male) who blamed their illnesses on the exposure to the herbicides went to the Veterans Administration for help--only to run into a stone wall of government denial and rejection. It took several years of pressure before Vietnam veterans began receiving both treatment and study of the physical and psychological problems caused by their exposure to Agent Orange and other defoliants. But no programs exist to help the aproximately 10,000 civilians, mostly women, who also did tours of duty in Vietnam and were exposed to the same chemicals.

Dioxin causes bladder, spleen and liver ailments and spontaneous abortion in laboratory animals, and birth defects in the offspring of laboratory mice. Research indicates that at the minimum--anything over one part per billion is considered hazardous--exposure of humans to the chemical causes chloracne, a skin disease; liver function problems that cana be linked to mental disturbances; muscle weakness and numbness; and changes in emotion, loss of drive and weeping. A recent study by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health indicates a link between dioxin and soft tissue sarcoma, a rare cancer.

Veterans add that Agent Orange has cause kidney and liver problems, once-rare cancers and birth defects in their children. Observers have reported patterns of spontaneous abortion, most notably in Oregon where several women who lived near Agent Orange-sprayed forests suffered miscarriages. A pattern of miscarriages and birth defects, though reported in a large-scale Vietnamese study, is not considered scientific evidence at this point because it has not been possible to isolate dioxin as the sole cause.

The problems of dioxin exposure touch far more than Vietnam veterans and civilian volunteers as Agent Orange has been used extensively in the U.S. to spray forests, roadsides, rice fields and tree farms. Millions of people have been exposed.

WHY NOT?

The IWW wants you—to join the 1% Club. Donate 1% of your income for operating expenses. Buy press stamps! Give to the Sustaining Fund! Help the *Industrial Worker*! When did your branch last cuss/discuss an article in the *Industrial Worker*? Leave an extra copy of the *Industrial Worker* in the laundromat!

Klanwatch Office Burned In Montgomery



(Editors' note: The following letter was written by Morris Dees of the Southern Poverty Law Center's Klanwatch Project in Montgomery, Alabama. This letter was sent out to all supporters of the project and was submitted to the **Industrial Worker** by Fellow Worker George LaForest. Used by permission of the Klanwatch Project.)

Dear Friend:

This letter is being written to you from my home, because in the early morning hours of this past Thursday (August 4, 1983) the Southern Poverty Law Center office with its vital KLANWATCH Project files was broken into, soaked with gasoline, and then set on fire.

You may find it hard to imagine such a horrible and open attack of terrorism taking place in this country today. But it did.

I am certain it is no coincidence that this terrible fire was set at a time when we are in the midst of an extremely important lawsuit against the Ku Klux Klan. The arsonists were apparently attempting to destroy critical evidence we had painstakingly gathered against the Klansmen who attacked peaceful black marchers in Decatur, Alabama.

Our evidence room, containing secret photos of Klan violence, statements of Klan informers, and other crucial evidence that we planned to use in our lawsuit against the Klan, was one of the most heavily damaged areas of the building.

I can't begin to describe the emotions each of us felt as we stood staring at the smoldering, ruined offices in those early morning hours. Foremost was our immense relief that nobody was injured.

But we all also experienced a deep ache in the pits of our stomachs that so much of what we had built could be so quickly destroyed with a few cans of gasoline torched by minds sick with bigotry and hate.

After the initial wave of emotional reactions, all of us at the Center made a common resolution--that this dastardly act of terrorism would by no means stop or lessen by one iota our resolve to expose the violence and terror of the Ku Klux Klan.

For a long time, we have feared that an attack such as this might take place. Our building is highly vulnerable, and we have received numerous threats concerning our forceful prosecution of civil rights claims against the Ku Klux Klan.

Right now clean-up and construction crews are working to get our headquarters back into operating shape. But for the future, it is clear that we must construct a much more secure and vault-like evidence room.

Together, we will continue to move ahead with all of our efforts to win justice for the victims of bigotry and injustice. Together, we will not fail.

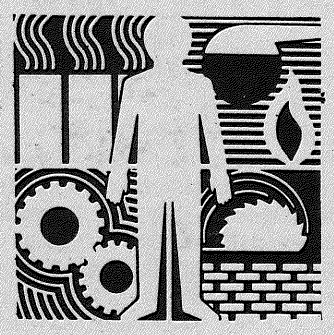
Morris Dees
Chief Trial Counsel

The arsonists were attempting to destroy evidence gathered against Klansmen who attacked peaceful black marchers.

(After two months of renovations, the Southern Poverty Law Center has moved back into their old offices. No instrumental evidence in the case against the KKK was destroyed, and investigations of the incident continue.)

Fred Thompson's

labor in north america



Eleven thousand custodial, lunch room and maintenance employees organized in 18 unions, walked out with Chicago teachers in October because they have not been getting pay raises in recent years. This is the first time they joined the teachers. Chicago says it has no money to give these people a raise, but administrative salaries in recent years have risen 70 percent and it saves the city $4 million a day to have the schools on strike. Alternative schools explaining capitalism might budge the school board.

Pittsburgh's teachers agreed to a three-year contract. Boston teachers returned to work to continue negotiations. In St. Louis 3,500 teachers had to strike. Cities going broke is what teachers hear almost everywhere.

October rains, floods and a state government that doesn't want strikers to eat added to the misery of the striking copper miners of Arizona. They've been on strike since July when Phelps-Dodge refused to go along with the terms accepted by other copper companies. Arizona law allows only ten pickets, but provides 425 cops to escort the scabs to work.

In January the Molders struck Magic Chef in Cleveland, Tenn. Eight months later, with scabs holding 80 percent of the jobs, and with Magic Chef trying to decertify the Molders, the union--still the bargaining agency for all workers in the unit, whether or not they're scabs--has negotiated a new contract. It provides a 30 cent an hour increase in pay in the first year, and 25 cents in each of the next two years. It is the union's hope that the NLRB will rule that Magic Chef refused to bargain in good faith up to this settlement, and thus force the re-hiring of all 570 who struck in January.

A nine-week strike by 16,600 Consolidated Edison employees in New York City led to a three-year contract with two annual 7 percent increases plus a wage re-opener in the third year. Of the strikers, 600 were IBEW members, the rest Utility Workers.

Oil Workers (OCAW) rank and file ratified by 97 percent the demands to be presented to the American oil industry in November; a two-year contract, pay increases each year, "premium-free" health insurance and a shorter work week for 50,000 workers. OCAW is promoting amalgation of its local unions.

To recapture work on the Houston ship channel, the AFL-CIO Building Trades' new contracts relax work rules, permit more helpers and cut pay 20 percent to permit union contractors to compete with non-union ones.

The Insurance Workers Union was formed in 1959 by merger of AFL and CIO unions in the field. In October it joined United Food and Commercial Workers despite campaigns by insurance companies against the merger, and the NLRB policy of letting non-members of the union vote on the question of affiliation if they worked in the bargaining unit. UFCW plans a campaign in the insurance field; 9 to 5 has already made a start there.

When GM married Toyota and agreed to re-open the former GM plant at Fremont, California, the members of UAW local 1364 expected to be called back to work and to negotiate through their local, in regard to re-hiring by seniority. But the UAW tells them seniority will have to be disregarded and that their local died when the plant was closed.

THE MYTH OF FOREIGN COMPETITION

(continued from page one)

million. While U.S. Steel was complaining about losses due to competition from abroad, it was investing heavily in overseas operations linked directly to its alleged competition.

It should be emphasized that American investments abroad between 1950 and 1980 increased 16 times from about $12 billion to $192 billions. In 1979, for example, 94 percent of Ford profits came from overseas. Coca Cola received 63 percent and Citibank received 83 percent of its profits from foreign investments that same year. While discussing foreign competition, a corporate financier remarked, "We have met the enemy and he is **us.**"

Discussing the global interdependence between allegedly competing firms, Barry Bluestone and Burnett Harrison, authors of **The Deindustrialization of America,** point out that American corporate management during the 1950s and 1960s helped to create its own future competition. During that time, Westinghouse became the principal stockholder in the Mitsubishi Corporation. General Electric owned the largest single block of shares, 40 percent, in Toshiba Electronics. Toshiba subsidiaries have 24 licensing agreements to make products in Japan that G.E. used to export: radar, generators, boilers, etc., all sold under the G.E. label. In the big 1967 strike against G.E. in the U.S., Toshiba provided its alleged competitor with crucial electronic parts. Japanese competition is by no means an independent force, but operates in many cases as a co-partner of U.S. capital.

By 1970, close to three-fourths of total U.S. exports and one-half of all imports were transactions between domestic and foreign subsidiaries of the same U.S. and foreign multinational conglomerates. American corporations were able to make massive investments abroad in new plants, producing commodities for foreign markets and later on, for reimporting back into the U.S. Bulova Watch provides a clear example. Bulova now manufactures watch movements in Switzerland, ships them to Pago Pago in American Samoa to be assembled, and shipped to the U.S. to be sold. Bulova president Harry B. Hershel (unintentionally) exposed the "competition" fraud when he said, "...we are able to beat the foreign competition because we **are** the foreign competition."

The economists Heilbronner and Thurow (**Economics Explained,** 1980) conclude that the natural market of the multinational corporations is the globe, and the multinational corporations are investing in each others' territories. Ruben Mettler, chairman of Business Roundtable, an association of the 200 largest American corporations, declared that the American economy is a sub-system of the world economy. The connection is confirmed in an article printed in **Direct Action,** organ of the British Anarcho-Syndicalist Movement (DAM) in their Spring 1983 issue:

> "There are five million unemployed in Britain. One out of seven. We are living in a time of crisis for capital. In Europe alone there are 20 million out of work. What is happening is the intention of government to teach



> the working class a lesson. We hear so much about the lack of capital. There is no lack of capital--it is man-made. Capital made in the United Kingdom is exported abroad for reinvestment in the Common Market, in the Third World and, surprisingly enough, in the United States. Britain is the world's largest overseas investor and is the U.S.A.'s largest foreign investor. Whatever the industrialists says, it is not the wages that cause the poor showing of British industry today, rather the facts lend themselves to the planned flight of capital."

American socialist and liberal advocates of nationalization should take note that nationalization of industry in Britain and other European countries did not alleviate the economic crisis nor do away with unemployment. In relation to the workforce, theirs is just as great and even more widespread than in the United States.

The absence of a far-sighted consistent program of resistance to the capitalist offensive is still further eroding the growth and influence of unions. The pro-capitalist unions lack the indispensable intellectual, idealogical, and above all, moral dedication to deal with the economic-political crisis. The following dispatch (**New York Times,** Aug. 9, 1983) illustrates the attitude of the pro-capitalist labor movement: "The AFL-CIO executive today called for a national industrial policy in which labor would join business and government in modernizing older industries and developing technologically advanced new industries."

Calling for embargoes to cut imports will not do because foreign countries can retaliate by curbing U.S. exports, thus increasing domestic unemployment. Proposals to meet competition by modernizing obsolete facilities, requiring fewer workers while increasing production, will likewise increase unemployment and still further deepen the crisis. The belief that there will be a "full recovery" from the crisis is a dangerous illusion. Even the best qualified conservative economists are convinced that there will never be full recovery.

The deindustrialization of America is already spawning growing hordes of permanently unemployed paupers barely existing on state charity. A vast nationalized poorhouse is in the making. Thirty-eight million, 15 percent of the U.S. population, live below the poverty level. The situation is **not** fundamentally different abroad.

Even more alarming is the almost complete absence of international communication between fellow workers to deal with common problems. The disastrous economic crisis afflicting any country's workers can be effectively tackled only on an international level. The natural world economy constitutes a close-knit, interdependent network of goods and services. Both multinational capitalism and state-capitalist nationalism, in which each state creates artificial economic barriers and political frontiers to the natural global economy, are not compatible with the international character and spirit of a genuine economic community.

It is necessary to unify all workers into an internationally organized, revolutionary movement dedicated to the abolition of capitalism. Only a world economy conducted and coordinated, not by governments and capitalists, but by networks of self-managed workers' organizations, can replace the political and economic institutions which now constitute a vast legalized crime against humanity.

(Author's note: Much of the factual material in this article has been drawn from **The Deindustrialization of America,** by Barry Bluestone and Burnett Harrison, published by Basic Books, 1983.)

Available from Local Groups and Branches:

Available from New York IWW:
A Worker's Guide to Direct Action, 50¢
PO Box 183, New York, New York 10028

Available from the Tacoma-Olympia Branch, 2115 S. Sheridan Ave., Tacoma, WA 98405: *Fellow Union Member,* 10¢ each; bundles of 5 to 15, 5¢ each; 15 to 499, 3¢ each; 500 or more, 2¢ each.

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[] Collective Bargaining Manual	.75
[] IWW Preamble and Constitution	.30
[] Inflation: Cause and Cure	.25
[] General Strike for Industrial Freedom	.50
[] One Big Union	1.00
[] Unions and Racism	1.00
[] Metal Workers' Guide to Health and Safety on the Job	.50

historical:

[] The IWW's First 70 years (hardbound)	$15.00
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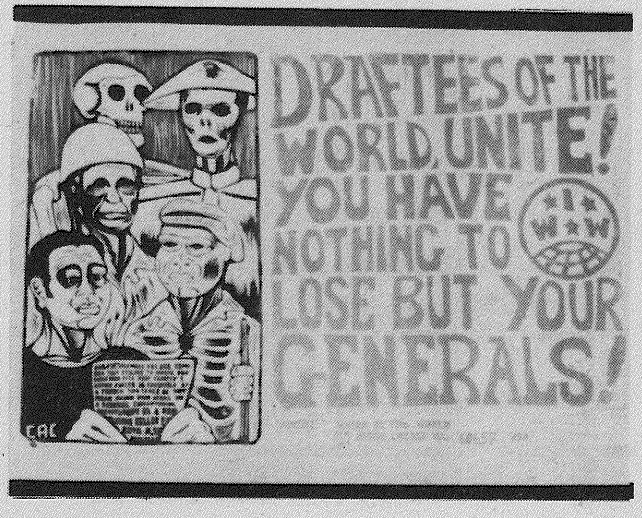
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[] General Strike	5.00
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[] Draftees of the World Unite!	5.00

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miscellaneous:

[] General Defense Button $.35



Airlines Knee-Deep in the Big Muddy

Bankruptcy Abuse

(continued from page one)

one. The first case in which there was serious question of the misuse of bankruptcy laws occurred when the Manville Corporation filed for bankruptcy in August, 1982. It filed under Chapter 11, not to ward off creditors from its door, but to sidestep an anticipated $1.9 billion in settlement costs and legal fees from suits by asbestos victims.

Then in April of this year, Wilson Foods Co. filed in an effort to free itself from contracts with union meatcutters because it said that the costs were too far above those of its non-union competitors. At the time of filing, Wilson broke off its labor contracts and cut meatcutters' wages by 40 to 50 percent. The question of the legality of Wilson's actions is currently in federal court.

And now Continental has filed and Eastern is threatening to, both with questionable motives.

These "bankruptcy abuse" cases, as opponents of the companies call them, have brought many questions into court which have serious implications for the labor movement. One important question pertains to the solvency of the company filing for bankruptcy. Continental, for example, has $50 million in available funds, while Manville had a reported net worth of $1.1 billion when it filed, according to the **Washington Post.** Can these companies, obviously solvent, claim to be bankrupt?

Further, will the courts also consider subsidiaries when ruling on these cases? Case in point: Frank Lorenzo, president of Continental, is also the owner of New York Air. Will New York Air's financial situation also be considered? One readily imagined scenario is that the firm with the most union trouble would transfer funds to another company in the same conglomerate, then file for bankruptcy. In other words, will there be any safeguards against systematic union-busting in these mazes of commonly-owned companies?

There is also the question of corporations' ability in any case to use the bankruptcy code to terminate labor contracts, given the protection for employees provided by the National Labor Relations Act.

The limits of the bankruptcy codes have yet to be spelled out in court. Some conflicting decisions have been made. For example, the 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals ruled last year that a company would not have to prove that it would collapse if labor agreements were not rescinded; it merely had to prove these contracts to be a burden. However, the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in another case that labor contracts can't be scrapped to save a company from failure.

The three unions currently on strike against Continental--the Machinists, the Flight Attendants, and the Air Line Pilots--have jointly filed briefs seeking to dismiss the company's bankruptcy petition.

A test case--National Labor Relations Board v. Bildis Co.--concerning the limits of Chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy code, is being considered by the Supreme Court.



Unions Walk Out At Continental Air

(continued from page one)

their strike is remarkably successful, because the airline has given contracts for the work in food preparation and cleaning services to outside firms like Marriott. In light of the recent bankrkuptcy action and these losses of jobs to outside companies, the Machinists claim that they stand to lose as many as 1500 of their jobs. The airline is also asking them to take a cut in pay from $17 per hour to $10.

The situation for the pilots is somewhat different. The Air Line Pilots Association still considers itself to be the bargaining unit, and talks continue between them and Continental. The airline is asking for a reduction to 25 percent of the previous work force, and some $60 million reductions in wages, or up to 50 percent of the pilots' pay. They are also requesting changes in the work rules, permitting them to keep the pilots and flight attendants on duty for much longer periods of time. This is considered by many of the crews to be unsafe, as well as personally unacceptable. Flight attendant Maureen Hull told the **Houston Post,** "It's not even the money; it's the working conditions. I can't work 16 hours in a row...I can work at McDonald's and the corner drug store for that."

It is just as well for the ALPA to stress the safety factor of the new work rules in their bid for public support of the strike. The ALPA has the highest average wage of any union. As pointed out by a sympathetic Delta pilot (also in the **Houston Post**), "How do you have sympathy for a guy making $50,000 to $100,000 a year when you make $20,000?"

Immediately following the walk-out, Continental crowed that they were able to keep the majority of their flights in operation despite the strike. For many pilots and flight attendants, this was a matter of personal finances, of not being able to afford to cease work. For others, there is disagreement with the unions' stance. Also, the **Industrial Worker** was told by one union official that many whose duties took them away from home at the time of the strike stayed on their schedule until the rotation brought them back to their home port rather than have to buy a ticket home. As time went on and the remaining pilots used up the number of hours they are allowed to be on duty, more and more flights were cancelled. A press release from the ALPA said that Frank Lorenzo, president of Continental, had to fly to Denver on United Airlines recently because his own company's flights to that city had been scratched. After a few days into the strike, the company announced its intention to hire scabs to keep their operation going.

Despite having at least $50 million in their operating funds, Continental has filed for bankruptcy. They claim this is solely a reorganization measure to allow them to adjust for losses due to the burgeoning of new, cheaper airlines since the industry was de-regulated in 1978. While this is not without truth, their claim that it is not also a plan to bust the unions does not hold water. This tactic has been used many times in the past two years to achieve such goals by different companies, and even governmental bodies (see accompanying article.)

The onset of de-regulation has had a curious effect on the industry. Naturally, it has meant much more competition for the established giants in the field, as regionally-based airlines such as People's Express in the East and Midway in Chicago have lowered rates, cut some of the luxuries from their flights, and given the older lines a run for their money. Previously, when an airline was having trouble with its profit margin, it could simply petition the Civil Aeronautics Board for a raise in rates. Like the public utility commissions, there was opportunity for citizens to protest these requests, and in some cases the requests were denied or reduced. Yet, with competition so scarce, it hardly mattered, and the airlines prospered.

This had a fallout effect for the unions. When they asked for a raise in wages or benefits, the airlines were much more amenable knowing that this only improved their case the next time they asked for a rate increase. Some in the established airlines have declared that de-regulation is anti-union because the unions at the old companies can no longer count on this largesse, as recent events at Continental and Eastern (also threatening bankruptcy) have proved. Also, part of the reason why the newer airlines can charge such low fees is because they are not unionized, and so can get away with lower pay, fewer staff, and having their employees perform a much wider variety of tasks.

Who's Who in Prison

The Charles H. Kerr Company, the nation's oldest nonsectarian publisher of socialist and labor literature, is putting together a compendium entitled **Who's Who in U.S. Prisons: 1984.** The book will gather short sketches of those imprisoned for labor, feminist, environmentalist, antiracist, peace, anti-imperialist and other political activities and for exercising free speech. It will include persons whose offenses are not strictly political but who are victims of racist, sexist, and anti-gay prosecutions. The Kerr Company asks defense committees and civil liberties organizations, as well as prisoners themselves, to write Charles H. Kerr Company, 1740 Greenleaf Avenue, Suite 7, Chicago, Illinois 60626 with information on such cases.

WHY JOIN THE IWW?

Because there are things we can do together that we cannot do alone. Some of these things will benefit your job and some will merely benefit the human race. Whether we are in a position to get you a pay raise or not, your conscience will repay you and your self-respect will increase if you join with us to get things done.

Since we are a union, this offer is open only to those who work for wages or salary; but since we are building One Big Union, it is open to wage and salary workers whether they happen to bargain through other unions or not. Look at the directory on Page 7. If you can readily reach someone there, do so. If not, write to the General Secretary, IWW, 3435 North Sheffield, Chicago, IL 60657, with a line about your job. The initiation fee is $5 in the U.S., and dues are $5 a month.

PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION of the INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD

The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people, and the few who make up the employing class have all the good things of life.

Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the earth and the machinery of production, and abolish the wage system.

We find that the centering of the management of industries in fewer and fewer hands makes the trade unions unable to cope with the ever growing power of the employing class. The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping defeat one another in wage wars. Moreover, the trade unions aid the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the working class have interests in common with their employers.

These conditions can be changed and the interests of the working class upheld only by an organization formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry, or in all industries if necessary, cease work whenever there is a strike or a lockout in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.

Instead of the conservative motto "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work," we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword "Abolition of the wage system."

It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism. The army of production must be organized, not only for the everyday fight with capitalists, but also to carry on production once capitalism shall have been overthrown. By organizing industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old.

readers' soap box

NEW MEMBER IN THE STICKS

Dear fellow workers:

Thank you for the opportunity to join a union that means something. I am a check cruiser for the U.S. Forest Service and in the last three years I've seen the price for stand exam plots (a unit of work done by foresters--ed. note) drop from $16.00 to $8.50. This is due solely to the government's efforts to pit worker against worker in the field I work in.

I am currently attempting to organize the independent forest workers so that they will discontinue their cutthroat bids on work. Anti-trust acts might interfere with this effort, but it's got to change. Too many people are going hungry through the winter because of these low bids.

"Workers of the World Unite."

A brand new member in Idaho

SAILORS' UNION HISTORY

Fellow Workers,

The Sailors' Union of the Pacific has established a project to publish a history of the Union, as well as other, related documents.

Given the historical link between the Union and the IWW, we are very interested in contacting all IWW members who feel they could contribute interviews or other information to the project. We are particularly eager to contact any surviving members of the Marine Transport Workers I.U. 510 active on the Gulf Coast during the 1930s.

Thank you.

S.U.P. History Project
450 Harrison Street
San Francisco, California 94105

I.W. ARRIVES LATE

Dear Fellow Workers:

I would like to make a suggestion concerning the date on the **Industrial Worker.** I deliver the **Industrial Worker** to five newsstands and bookstores in Manhattan and since I don't receive my bundle until the 15th or 20th of the month, this means that for more than half the time the issue is on the stands it looks dated. (The September issue will be out from September 15th or 20th until October 15th or 20th.) I think people are much more likely to take a chance on buying something new if it at least has the current month and would hesitate otherwise. I know that this is the way I feel when I look through publications in radical bookstores.

Since we need to attract as many people as possible, and newsstand managers sometimes complain about how late the **Industrial Worker** comes in, I propose that the date be moved up a month. This way the September issue would be on the stands from August 15-20 to September 15-20 and never look like an outdated issue with stale news. Please let me know if you think this is a good idea and can be implemented.

Yours in Solidarity,
Bruce Kayton

industrial unionism

Views ...

Sensible Idea Long Overdue

As reported elsewhere in this issue, the pilots, flight attendants, and ground crews at Continental Airlines have gone out on strike over reductions in pay, work force, and changes in work rules. The airline is trying to enforce these demands by a bankruptcy action which would allow them to renege on their contracts and decertify the unions as bargaining agents.

To add insult to injury in this complex affair, the unions seem intent on not supporting each other. The Machinists, for instance, have been out on strike since August, but the other two unions crossed their picket lines until early October, even though faced with the same problems.

Has it not occurred to anyone that, since they all work for the same firm, they would be better off to work together in bargaining and other job actions? Surely backing each other would be preferable to letting Continental stick it to the Machinists while waiting around for the same thing to happen to the rest.

This goes even further than craft unionism at the company level, though, as patently ridiculous as this has been shown to be by these events. It also goes for the industry level. For one thing, the workers at Eastern are staring straight at the same problem. For another, were the workers at the newer, de-regulation-spawned airlines also organized, the ability of People's Express, New York Air and Air West to undercut the older lines by paying lower wages and making fewer people do more work would be greatly reduced. Why aren't all these workers cooperating with one another for the common good?

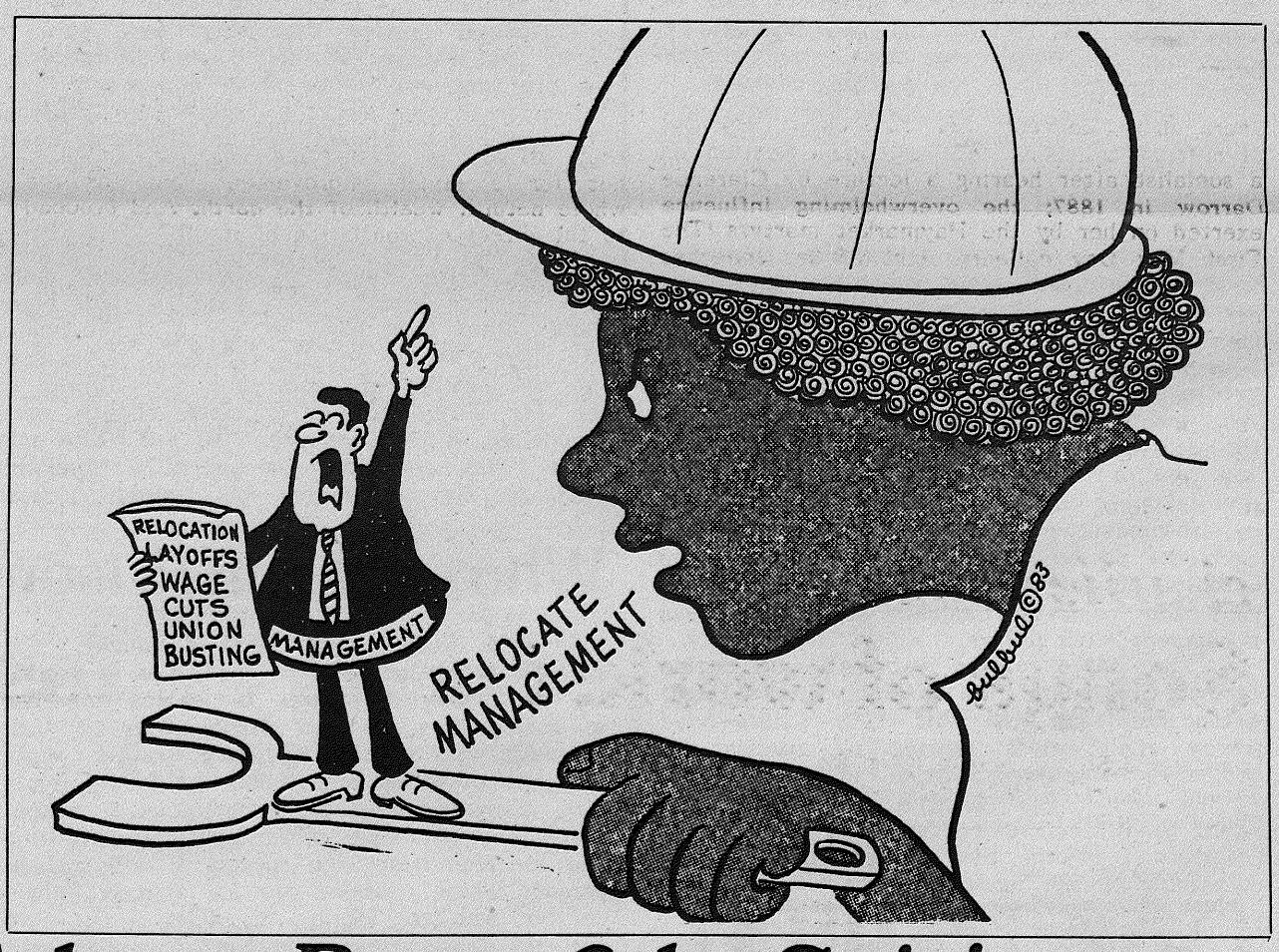
The privileges of members of craft unions such as the Air Line Pilots are won at the expense of the less privileged, and can always be taken away by the boss. It has been a hundred years since organizing on the basis of industry rather than craft first entered the scene. How much longer before this simple, sensible idea wins its place in workers' affairs?

CONGRATS, LECH!

The staff of the **Industrial Worker** would like to extend our congratulations to the members of the Solidarity union in Poland, who were recently honored for their courage and ideals by the awarding of the Nobel Prize to their most noted figure, Lech Walesa.

It is ironic that this award is being put to use as anti-Soviet propaganda by the Western politicians and press. The very people who praise Solidarity the loudest for its bravery in standing up against the Communists would scream the loudest if a movement with similar goals were to become influential in a capitalist country.

Nonetheless, we extend greetings and warmest regards to the activists of Solidarity, who have done so much to deserve this award. We wish them, and other workers like them in every country, the best of luck in their future endeavors.



Radical Tales to Renew the Spirit

Harvey O'Connor, **Revolution in Seattle.** Seattle, Left Bank Books, 1981, 300 pages, paper, illustrated, $7.50.

I became aware of the existence of this book only when the author's sister-in-law, Georgia Lloyd, recently sent me a copy. The first edition was published by Monthly Review in 1961. This new edition by Left Bank Books carries the IWW bug of the Workshop Printers.

In part it is the story of five days in February, 1919, when labor ruled a city. It was the first general strike in the U.S.A., called by the AFL Central Labor Council of Seattle in support of shipyard workers. The membership of the Central Labor Council and its affiliates included many two-card Wobblies and Socialists. Harvey O'Connor was a participant in this affair and was indicted for it, but beat the rap.

This book devotes only one chapter to the General Strike. The rest is a lively account of labor struggles in the state of Washington from the 1890s into the 1930s. Everything west of the Cascades in the period 1900-1920 was a seething cauldron of class struggle, and from there eastward to Spokane. The loggers, sawmill workers, and shipyard workers were the militant spearhead of those remarkable times.

It is said that people who make class struggle history seldom write about it. We are fortunate that Harvey O'Connor is an exception.

O'Connor rightly gives much space to the Everett massacre and the Centralia outrages, and also has a vivid description of life in the logging camps, where he worked, and how the IWW brought in the eight-hour day and better conditions. He tells of radical papers that sometimes outsold the metro dailies: the **Seattle Daily Call** and **International Weekly** of the Socialists, the **Industrial Worker** and **Solidarity** of the IWW, and the **Seattle Union Record** of the Central Labor Council, the first union daily in the United States. O'Connor worked for several of these papers.

He tells of the brutal suppression accelerated by Wilson's crusade for democracy, and of farcical trials with one-sided justice and harsh sentences. The last Centralia prisoner, Ray Becker, did not get out of prison until 1939.

It is said that people who make class struggle history seldom write about it. We are fortunate that Harvey O'Connor is an exception. We need to know the story of these struggles in order to renew our spirit. One thought that lingers with me is that O'Connor repeatedly describes from memory some radical leaflet, pamphlet or newspaper, and then remarks, "Not a single copy is known to exist today." Fellow workers, for the sake of the history of the movement, do not throw away your left literature. Offer it as a gift to some university or historical society library.

Virgil J. Vogel

... and Reviews

The Example of Voltairine de Cleyre

Paul Avrich: **An American Anarchist--The Life of Voltairine de Cleyre.** Princeton University Press, 266 pages, cloth only, $25.
Voltairine de Cleyre: **The First May Day--The Haymarket Speeches 1895-1910.** Edited and introduced by Paul Avrich. Cienfuegos Press and Soil of Liberty, 64 pages, paperback, $2.50.

Poet, revolutionary theorist and tireless agitator, Voltairine de Cleyre (1866-1912) was an inspired defender of the cause of human emancipation. An important force in international anarchism, her friends included Peter Kroptokin, Louise Michel, Enrico Malatesta and Alexander Berkman; Emma Goldman called her "the greatest woman anarchist of America." In her later years she was a vigorous supporter of the Industrial Workers of the World and a frequent speaker at IWW forums.

In the first full-length autobiography of this remarkable woman, Paul Avrich minimizes his own critical evaluations of her work and simply tells the story of her life. And an impressive story it is: her impoverished midwestern childhood; her nightmarish teenage years in a convent; her subsequent espousal of militant atheism; her self-identification as a socialist after hearing a lecture by Clarence Darrow in 1887; the overwhelming influence exerted on her by the Haymarket martyrs (**The First May Day** collects eight of her speeches on this topic); her adherence to anarchism and her lifelong devotion to that movement's ideals; her work with poor, Yiddish-speaking Jewish immigrants; her defense of the Mexican Revolution (she was the Chicago correspondent for Ricardo Flores Magon's paper, **Regeneracion**); her ardent feminism; her long and terrible illness; her death at 45; and her burial at Waldheim, near the monument honoring Engel, Fischer, Lingg, Parsons and Spies.

Doubtless Avrich's well-researched and thoughtful study will long remain the standard introduction to her life. As the author himself declares, however, many facets of Voltairine de Cleyre's multifarious and tumultuous career call for more scrutiny and commentary. We are told that two thousand people attended her funeral, including William D. Haywood, Vincent St. John and William Trautmann (early officials of the IWW), as well as the English, Hungarian, Czech and Italian branches of the IWW.

We would like to know more, much more, about her IWW connections, and about her association with other labor radicals. Avrich does not mention, for example, her friendship with Anton Johannsen, an anarchist who was President of the important Chicago local of the Woodworkers' Union, and a key figure of the early Chicago Federation of Labor.

In her admirable pamphlet, **Direct Action,** Voltairine de Cleyre summed up her view of class war: "The sources of life, and all the natural wealth of the earth, and the tools necessary to cooperative production, must become free of access to all...Unionism must widen and deepen its purposes, or it will go under...[Unions] must learn that the course of growth is not so much along the line of higher wages but shorter hours, which will enable them to increase membership, to take in everybody who is willing to come into the union. They must learn that if they want to win battles, all allied workers must act together, act quickly (serving no notice on bosses), and retain their freedom to do so at all times. And finally they must learn that even them, when they have a complete organization, they can win nothing permanent unless they strike for everything--not for a wage, not for a minor improvement, but for the whole natural wealth of the earth. And proceed to the direct expropriation of it all!"

Her passionate interes in "every move the people make to throw off their chains, no matter where, no matter how," and the imaginative and uncompromising way she grappled with the real problems of social transformation, give the life and work of Voltairine de Cleyre an exemplary meaning for today.

Franklin Rosemont

Unions must learn that even when they have complete organization they can win nothing permanent unless they strike for everything--not a for wage, not for a minor improvement, but for the whole natural wealth of the earth.
--Voltairine de Cleyre

charlie king

Songs of work, risk & clams

Somebody's Story, Charlie King, $6.50, Rainbow Snake Records, P.O. Box 922, Greenfield, Massachusetts 01302.

Presented here on this album, in a variety of styles, are a number of songs that would be of interest to readers of the **Industrial Worker.** Charlie King has for some time been composing his own lyrics which lean heavily on social themes. There is not a song on this album that does not contain a social message in one form or another. He is also backed by a competent group of accompanists who obviously share his social commitment.

On **Somebody's Story** there are some very pithy commentaries on the day to day work life as well as commemorations of past and present fighters for a better world. "Two Good Arms" was written on the 50th anniversary of the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti, and asks who will remember the judge who passed sentence, the jury, the chaplain or the man who pulled the switch?

"Thank You Anita" is a sly reference to the popular songtress whose attempts at reviving the witch hunt atmosphere united gays and straights alike. "Acres of Clams" is about the Clamshell Alliance and refers to the proponents of nuclear power finding themselves "...surrounded by acres of clams."

"Who's the Criminal Here?" tells of those who went to Canada rather than to Vietnam; and the churches that shelter refugees from Central America. Both are illegal acts, but pose the question of who is the real criminal.

"A Woman of Great Energy" shows that a woman worker has to do twice as much to get half as much as the men do. "Mountains of Mourne" is a beautiful old Irish song about an immigrant worker in England.

"Acceptable Risks" compares the worker's lot to that of the soldier, as the soldiers who were at the atomic testing sites and the workers handling toxic materials are both assured by their superiors that they needn't worry for their safety. However, both sets of bosses "...can't cover up the truth no more."

The two songs that should appeal especially to readers of this paper are "Taft-Hartley" and "Our Life Is More Than Our Work." The first gives a rationalization for wild cat strikes: "Mr. Taft can't dig it, Mr. Hartley can't haul it, I'm gonna leave it in the ground!" The other song, whose title is self-explanatory ("...and our work is more than our job."), reflects distaste at having to do war-related work or face being out of work, which is plain and simple job blackmail.

Most of the songs in this album are delivered in a pleasant neo-country and western style and present a welcome addition to one's collection. It is hoped that this album will receive wide listening, and that radio stations that broadcast the folkies will be prevailed upon to give Charlie King's material good air time.

Alfredo Nuberoja

IWW Directory

NORTH AMERICA

ALASKA: Anchorage IWW, Ruth Sheridan, Delegate, 4704 Kenai, Anchorage, Alaska 99504
Juneau/Douglas IWW, Barry Roderick, Delegate, PO Box 748, Douglas, Alaska 99824
Fairbanks IWW, Chris White, Delegate, Box 72938, Fairbanks, Alaska 99707

ARIZONA: Stan Jaroszenski, IW Distributor, 719 South 4th Ave. (5), Barrio Hacienda, Tucson, Arizona 85701

BRITISH COLUMBIA: Vancouver IWW, Box 34334, Station D, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 4P3 or phone (604) 430-6605

CALIFORNIA: San Diego IWW, Sandra Dutky, Delegate, 4472 Georgia, San Diego, California 92116, Phone (619) 296-9966
San Francisco Bay Area General Membership Branch, Branch Secretary, PO Box 40485, San Francisco, California 94140; Richard Ellington, Delegate, 6448 Irwin Ct., Oakland, California 94609, Phone (415) 658-0293

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: IWW, PO Box 53243, Washington, DC 20007

GEORGIA: Elton Manzione, delegate, 726 Pulaski, Athens, Georgia 30601, Phone (404) 353-1218

IDAHO: IWW Delegate, Route 1, Box 137, Potlatch, Idaho 83855

INDIANA: IWW Delegate, 520 West Smith, Bloomington, Indiana 47401

IOWA: All Workers Organizing Committee, Box 382, Sioux Rapids, Iowa 50585

ILLINOIS: IWW, 3435 N. Sheffield, Chicago, Illinois 60657, Phone (312) 549-5045
Champaign/Urbana IWW, Jeff Stein, Delegate, 1007 North Randolph, Champaign, Illinois 61820

KANSAS: IWW Delegate, PO Box 522, Wichita, Kansas 67201

KENTUCKY: Louisville IWW Group, c/o Long, 1841 Sherwood Ave., Apt. 2, Louisville, KY 40205

MARYLAND: J. K. Spitzberg, Delegate, 13042 Open Hearth Way, Germantown, Maryland 20874

MASSACHUSETTS: Boston General Membership Branch, PO Box 454, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139. Meetings are held the first Sunday of each month, Phone 522-7090 or 524-0529

MICHIGAN: IWW Delegate, 415 Ethel, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506
Ann Arbor/Detroit General Membership Branch, 400 North First Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48105
U-Cellar IU 660 Job Branch, 341 East Liberty, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107
People's Wherehouse, IU 660 Branch, 727 West Ellsworth Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104
Ann Arbor Printers' Co-op, IU 450, 4435 Liberty Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48103
Copper Country IWW, Robin Oye, Delegate, 1101 Cottage Row, Hancock, Michigan 49930

MINNESOTA: Minneapolis/St. Paul IWW, Nancy Arthur Collins, Delegate, 1621 Marshall Avenue (3), St. Paul, Minnesota 55104

MONTANA: A. L. Nurse, Delegate, Route 5, Box 88, Thompson Falls, Montana 59874, Phone (406) 827-3238 or PO Box 8562, Missoula, Montana 59807

NEW MEXICO: New Mexico General Membership Branch, PO Box 4872, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87196

NEW YORK: Buffalo IWW, Henry Pfaff, Delegate, 77 Eckhert St., Buffalo, New York 14207, Phone (716) 877-6073
Central New York General Membership Branch, c/o 201 Seeley Road, Apr. 4-H, Syracuse, New York 13224; Georgene McKown, Delegate, 117 Edgemere Road, Syracuse, New York 13208
New York City Regional Membership Branch, PO Box 183, New York, New York 10028. Delegates: Rochelle Semel, 788 Columbus Ave., New York, New York 10025, Phone (212) 662-8801; Pete Posthumus, 35 Williams Dr., West Paterson, New Jersey 07424; Branch Secretary: Jim Jahn, 252 West 91st St., New York, New York 10024, Phone (212) 496-8913
Mid-Hudson Region IWW, c/o Box 310, Rosendale, New York 12472

OHIO: IWW Delegate, PO Box 47, Dayton, Ohio 45402

ONTARIO: Delegate: Brian Burch, 13 Kerr Road, Station 30, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

PENNSYLVANIA: Philadelphia, Tom Hill, delegate, 5023 Cedar Ave., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19143

RHODE ISLAND: IWW c/o 1400 Broad St., Providence, Rhode Island 02905

SOUTH CAROLINA: IU 450 Branch, Harbinger Publications, 18 Bluff Road, Columbia, South Carolina 29201, Phone (803) 254-9398

TEXAS: Austin: IWW, 915 East 48½ Street, Austin, Texas 78751, Phone (512) 452-3722
Houston: Gilbert Mers, 7031 Kernel, Houston, Texas 77087, Phone (713) 921-0877

WASHINGTON: Seattle General Membership Branch, 3238 33rd Ave. South, Seattle, Washington 98144
Bellingham GMB, PO Box 1386, Bellingham, Washington 98277, Phone 671-9995. Meets first Monday at 6:30
Tacoma/Olympia General Membership Branch, 2115 South Sheridan Ave., Tacoma, Washington 98405, Phone (206) 272-8119

WEST VIRGINIA: Michelle Wolford, 440 Pennsylvania Avenue, Morgantown, West Virginia 26505

WISCONSIN: Madison General Membership Branch and General Defense Committee Local 9, c/o 426 Cantwell Court, Madison, Wisconsin 53703

PACIFIC

GUAM: Guam IWW Group, Shelby Shapiro, Delegate, PO Box 864, Agana, Guam 96910

AUSTRALIA: IWW Sydney Office, 417 King St., 1st Floor, Newton, Sydney, Australia



irish notes

Workers Hold Dublin Mill

by L. O'Neill

Most are familiar with Northern Ireland's "Provo (Provisional Irish Republican Army) Problem" these days. In short, the oppressed have given up bootlicking and started kicking ass instead. What's not so well known is that Southern Ireland may have the beginnings of a similar "problem" on its hands. You could call it a "Ranks Problem."

Back in February of this year, Ranks (a British-based multinational) decided on a little cost cutting measure: closing down both of its Irish flour mills. Ranks offered its workers the usual condolences and a handful of peanuts. The workers settled for occupying the Dublin mill (and its several million pounds' worth of corporate flour.)

That was eight months ago. Today, despite a stint in Mountjoy Jail, a complete sellout by their union (the Irish Transport and General Workers Union), condemnation from the pulpit and press, and despite ongoing harassment by the Special Branch (the "Free State" FBI), the Ranks workers are still holding the Dublin mill.

Beyond their own battle, they've forged links with anti-tax marches, unemployed action groups, four or five other industrial takeovers throughout the South, and even the Release Nicky Kelly campaign.

A few excerpts from their manifesto serve notice that these workers have moved well beyond their own bread and butter. Addressed to "Fellow Workers," the Ranks Manifesto calls on the Irish government to stop being a multinational "lap-dog" and nationalize industry. It calls on the "employed and unemployed to stand together" and resist "state oppression." And to the "whole official trade union bureaucracy" the Dublin workers say, "if you won't stand behind your membership, don't stand in their way."

The Ranks Manifesto has been endorsed by laid off workers occupying other plants in Southern Ireland and, much more worrisome to the Free State establishment, these workers have the active support of Sinn Fein (the political wing of the Provisional I.R.A.)

Of course a handful of workers and a manifesto don't exactly make a movement, even with Sinn Fein backing. But who knows? There are thousands of angry workers on the Free State dole queues. Show them half a chance, and they might damn well have a go at it. Like one 19-year-old did on the tube the other night. Some Fine Gael TD [Fine Gael is the party currently in power. A "TD" is a member of the Irish parliament.] was waffling on about the government's "brand new youth training programs" when suddenly this young woman jumped up and grabbed the audience microphone. Before anyone could switch it off, she told him straight out what he could do with his "training programs."

Of course the corporate boys don't make a habit of leaving "loose microphones" lying around. Still we'll have to keep an eye on this "Ranks Problem." You can be sure the Special Branch will.

Finally, an update on the Nicky Kelly case (see the July Industrial Worker for background on his torture and frameup.) Kelly came off his hunger strike in early summer after 38 days, when it became clear that the Free State government was going to let him die and bury the whole frameup with him.

Getting Kelly out of the public's conscience would have been especially handy at this point, as the Free State's justice mill is cranking up to full capacity once again. The same judge who did Kelly is ever busy hammering "subversives" in Dublin's Special Criminal Court. It's amazing to see the number of men who first confess their guilt and then beat themselves black and blue before coming to court.

Most of them are part of a vicious gang of conspirators known as the Embassy 21. It seems that these unarmed people were attempting "violence" against the State during an H Block march back in July, 1981. They obviously didn't plan things too well--the Free State police blockaded the whole march and beat the shit out of everyone, including my 60-year-old aunt.

Like I said, it would be handy having Nicky Kelly dead and buried, instead of peering down off those nagging posters which keep getting plastered up all over the South.

(Protest letters should be sent to Garret Fitzgerald, Taoiseach, Leinster House, Dublin, Ireland. Demand the release of this innocent political prisoner.)

Ranks offerred its workers the usual condolences and a handful of peanuts. They settled for occupying the mill.



Joblessness Soars for Irish Youth

The southern 26 counties of Ireland are no strangers to unemployment. Since 1922 over one million people have been forced to leave Ireland to find work in Britain or the U.S. Although this spring one member of the Dail (the Irish parliament) called for a renewed round of emigration as the only solution to mass youth unemployment, Ireland's young people are staying home. The days of tight labor markets in Britain are over and the worldwide recession curtails the possibility of leaving for traditional points of immigration.

Departing multinationals, lured to Ireland by grants and tax exemptions, are leaving escalating rates of joblessness in their wake. Unemployment in the 26 counties has risen from 77,000 in 1973 to 194,000 by midsummer 1983.

The unemployment is hitting the half of the population under 25 disproportionately hard; between January 1980 and July 1982 registered unemployment rose overall by 69 percent, but for those under 25 unemployment rose by 110 percent.

Young people with enough qualifications to go on to third level education will find it difficult to get into any of the colleges or universities since a total of 22,000 students have applied for 8,000 available places. But even completing third level courses is no guarantee of finding a job. Of the 6,000 nurses who qualified last year after a three year course, less than 2,000 will get jobs.

One thing the 26 counties have in abundance is youth training schemes. These include the Youth Employment Agency; the Temporary Youth Employment Scheme which is run by the Department of Education; the Environment Improvement Scheme which is run by the Department of the Environment; and the Work Experience Programme, the Community Youth Training Programme, the National Manpower Service and the Employment Incentive Scheme, all of which were created by the Department of Labour.

Despite this confused plethora of programs, the jobless rate for the 15-19 age group is twice the national average, high school drop-outs have only a 50 percent chance of getting a job in their first year of job hunting, and the 26 counties as a whole have the dubious distinction of the highest unemployment rate in western Europe.

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